

Protecting Your AIR QUALITY

Air is one of our most valuable resources. People, animals and plants depend upon clean air to grow and sustain life; without good air quality it is difficult to maintain good health.

So, how do you know that the air quality in South Carolina is good?

The Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) is charged with protecting the air quality in South Carolina. It is our mission “to conserve and enhance South Carolina air resources in a manner that promotes quality of life.” While we continue to have good air quality in our state, growing population and stricter national air quality standards create challenges.

DHEC’s regulation of emissions from industry and working collaboratively with local government and other partners to implement effective strategies has helped to reduce the emission of air pollutants.

So, how you know that SC DHEC’s Air Program is doing their part to protect the air quality in our state?

DHEC is responsible for **monitoring, regulating** and **enforcing** both state and national air quality

regulations and standards. The air is monitored and sampled by a statewide network of monitors that measure the concentration levels of pollutants in the air outside around the state.

DHEC collects and analyzes data that helps to determine if an area is meeting the ambient air standards, as set by the federal government.



Need additional information?

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control’s Bureau of Air Quality
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 898-4123
www.scdhec.gov/environment/baq

Or your local regional office
www.scdhec.gov/environment/envserv/regional_services.htm



www.scdhec.gov

*We promote and protect the health
of the public and the environment.*

CR-009836 10/10

South Carolina Department of Health
and Environmental Control
Bureau of Air Quality

AIR PROTECTION in South Carolina



INITIATIVES & SERVICES

S.C. DHEC works hard to provide air quality protection and assure responsible stewardship of air quality by performing tasks to assess and reduce our health and environmental risks. These tasks include the following:

Facility Emission Evaluations

Facility emission inventories along with other data are used to identify and calculate air emissions in the state. This information is required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and is used in policy and other decision-making processes by both the state and by EPA. It is also used to assess fees for facilities.

Emission inventory activities include:

- workshops, conference and training
- emission inventory development and review
- emission inventory fee collection

Permitting and Enforcement Activities

DHEC is responsible for issuing, renewing and modifying air permits for facilities and businesses that release pollutants into the air. We review applications in addition to any other documentation deemed necessary to determine safe limits and conditions in which a facility can operate. The applications include air dispersion modeling to demonstrate compliance with emission standards. Operating guidelines and regulatory limitations are listed in air permits, and must be adhered to avoid a violation. However, if a violation should occur, a facility must correct the problem and may be required

to address charges at an enforcement conference. And if appropriate, a facility may be subject to one or several of the following requirements:

- additional pollution control device(s)
- modeling analysis for permit reviews
- suspension of their air permit(s)
- facility closing
- penalties



These procedures ensure that regulated pollutants from a facility do not exceed their limits and do not pose any additional risk to the public's health and the environment. The role of enforcement is to develop appropriate steps to assist a facility in returning to compliance.

Compliance Oversight

DHEC is responsible for ensuring that permitted facilities within our state follow air quality regulatory requirements. Inspectors conduct site visits and inspections during facility construction and after start of operation. If a facility does not meet the conditions of their permit, actions may be taken against a facility for non-compliance. Compliance assurance activities include but are not limited by the following:

- tracking compliance monitoring and reports
- reviewing all inspections/investigations reports and referrals
- source testing to ensure conformance with EPA's compliance monitoring strategy
- compliance monitoring
- asbestos abatement
- certification review
- incident investigations
- risk management plans inspections/review

Attainment of NAAQS and Regulations

DHEC works to ensure that the air quality in SC attains the national ambient air quality standards by developing rules, regulations and implementing strategies to reduce pollution. DHEC performs regional modeling of air emissions to help inform regulation and policy development.

Monitoring data is analyzed to ensure attainment of the NAAQS for criteria air pollutants, ensure that regulations comply with the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA), and help conduct assessments of the air monitoring network. In addition, we are responsible for maintaining any regulation changes, updates and/or revisions.



DHEC works closely with local municipalities to share ideas and coordinate activities that reduce harmful levels of pollutants. These ideas include emission reduction activities, such as updating open burning ordinances, idle reduction projects, and small gas powered tool exchanges.

DHEC works with local government staff, schools, community groups, businesses and the general public to encourage positive behavior changes that support air quality. These include reducing single-occupancy vehicles and using public transportation, carpooling/vanpooling, walking or bicycling.

DHEC provides ozone forecasts from April through September.

DHEC utilizes these initiatives and services to help improve the air quality in SC. Through its efforts, and the involvement of local government and community partners we enjoy some of the best air quality in the country.